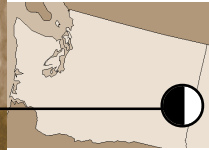


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people so that all may
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Your
America.



Palouse Trail Plan Pays Dividends



The Palouse Path Task Force had developed a vision and enthusiasm for a trail, but the “how-to” wasn’t clear until they completed the first critical step -- developing a trail plan.

The Dream of A Path

At a Pullman Civic Trust sponsored public workshop in 1986, Nancy Mack, a Trust member, forty citizens and agency staff expressed their dream: a safe place to walk and bicycle with their children.

Calling themselves the Palouse Path Task Force, they had been inspired by a Trust-sponsored hike the previous year on an 8-mile abandoned rail line between the rural college communities of Pullman, Washington and Moscow, Idaho.

The Task Force, however, didn’t know how to turn their dream of a path into action. They turned to the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (Rivers & Trails) program of the National Park Service for help.

A Path for the Palouse

To provide clear direction, Rivers & Trails helped the Task Force develop a trail plan, *A Path for the Palouse*. Rivers & Trails inventoried natural and cultural resources, researched major issues and identified alternative routes.

Rivers & Trails then helped the Task Force to commit local and state agencies -- Whitman County, Washington State University and Washington State Department of Transportation -- to adopt the plan as part of their comprehensive and capital improvements plans, making the trail a serious contender in competing for future funding.

Where There’s a Plan, There’s Action

The strategy paid off. When trails became eligible for federal transportation funding in 1994, the Task Force, backed by the trail plan, convinced the Washington State Department of Transportation to secure \$900,000 for trail design and construction. The Trust also raised matching money from local agencies, contributions from Washington State University and the University of Idaho and over \$577,000 in private donations.

In 1996, when the Palouse River & Blue Mountain Railroad consolidated service onto one track, the Task Force again pointed to the trail plan and persuaded Whitman County to “railbank,” or preserve, the unused railroad line for use as a trail.

In 1998, the Bill Chipman Palouse Trail, dedicated in memory of community leader Bill Chipman, opened on a wet spring day. Twelve years after Mack and the Task Force had first discussed their dream, children had a safe path on which to walk and bicycle. Leading the way were the University of Idaho and Washington State University bands, marching like pied pipers from opposite ends of the trail.

For More Information

Contact Alex Stone or Bryan Bowden of the National Park Service’s Rivers & Trails Program at (206) 220-4108 or alex_stone@nps.gov or (206) 220-4118 or bryan_bowden@nps.gov.

Keys to Success

- The Pullman Civic Trust’s trail plan gave the Palouse Path Task Force a **unified voice and clear direction** during the twelve years of trail development.
- Commitment of parties supporting the Palouse Path Task Force to **work together** and capture a collective vision for the path.
- **Dedication and enthusiasm of volunteers** like Pullman Civic Trust’s Nancy Mack and Loretta Annawalt, and Whitman County’s Mike Werner.



● **rail-trail** -- a hiking and biking path created on railroad lines that are abandoned and no longer in use.

Bill Chipman Palouse Trail

Rivers & Trails Program
National Park Service

visioning

City of Moscow, ID
City of Pullman, WA
Palouse Path Task Force
Palouse Trail Committee
Washington State Department of
Transportation
University of Idaho
Washington State University
Whitman County, Parks, Fair and
Development Services

Twelve Years, Eight Miles: What a Trail!

Nancy Mack and forty citizens express their dream of a *safe path for children* at a Pullman Civic Trust workshop.



“I can’t overstate how the trail plan gave us a vision and sense of purpose -- for over a decade -- until the funding, politics and neighborly goodwill joined to build the trail.”

Mike Werner, former Parks Director
Whitman County

Palouse Path Task Force asks National Park Service to help them *develop a trail plan*.

1986

Whitman County and Washington State Department of Transportation *incorporates* trail plan into the county’s comprehensive plan.

1987

Trail wins a \$900,000 *federal transportation grant* and \$577,000 from local and *private donations*.

1994

Whitman County *acquires abandoned rail line* for trail use.

1996

Whitman County asks National Park Service to help develop an *interpretive plan* for the trail.

Eight-mile Bill Chipman Palouse Trail *opens*.

1998

Trail amenities added, like interpretive displays, gateways and a school curriculum.

2000



What the Future Holds for the Palouse Trail

The success of the Bill Chipman Palouse Trail fueled the “Pullman Extension” to bring the trail through downtown Pullman. Passed just five months after the trail opened in 1998, the \$1.9 million bond levy won with 72% approval, a margin of victory made even more remarkable because it took place when the price of wheat -- the major export of this farming community -- was down. Extensions and linkages of the trail continue to increase throughout Moscow, Latah County and the University of Idaho as well.

Help From the National Park Service

Strategy development. Resource inventories. Interpretive planning. Trail planning. In these ways over the course of two separate years, the National Park Service contributed to the Palouse Path Task Force’s twelve-year-long effort to develop an 8-mile trail. This is one example of how the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program works -- it provides short-term staff assistance to local groups to help them solve the problems they face when protecting their community’s important resources. If you think the National Park Service could help your group, contact Michael Linde, Program Leader, Rivers & Trails, 909 First Avenue, Seattle, WA 98104 or (206) 220-4113 or visit www.nrc.nps.gov/rtca